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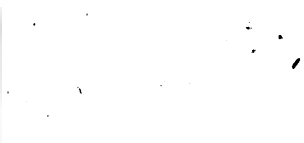


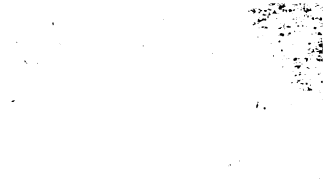


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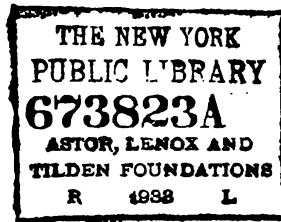
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A
DOCTRINAL EPISTLE,
WRITTEN BY
ELIAS HICKS,
OF JERICO, ON LONG ISLAND,
IN THE YEAR
1820; +
PURPORTING TO BE
AN EXPOSITION
OF
CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE,
RESPECTING
THE NATURE AND OFFICE
OF
JESUS CHRIST.

WITH REFERENCES
TO THOSE TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE
BY WHICH ITS TRUTH, OR FALLACY, MAY BE READILY TESTED.

Beloved, believe not every Spirit; but try the Spirits, whether they are of God.
1 John, iv. i.

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NOTICE TO THE READER.

IN the following Review of the Epistle in question, it was thought the fairest, as well as the clearest and most intelligible mode of exposition, to give the whole Epistle, as it has been circulated in manuscript, by the author; and to confront the same, in its various assumptions, and positions, with the plain letter of the Scriptures, upon opposite pages. This method allows every reader an opportunity of drawing his own conclusions, as to the soundness of the writer's opinions, and their consistency, or inconsistency, with the whole tenor of the Old and New Testaments, as to the soul-interesting facts of the Birth and Mission of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.



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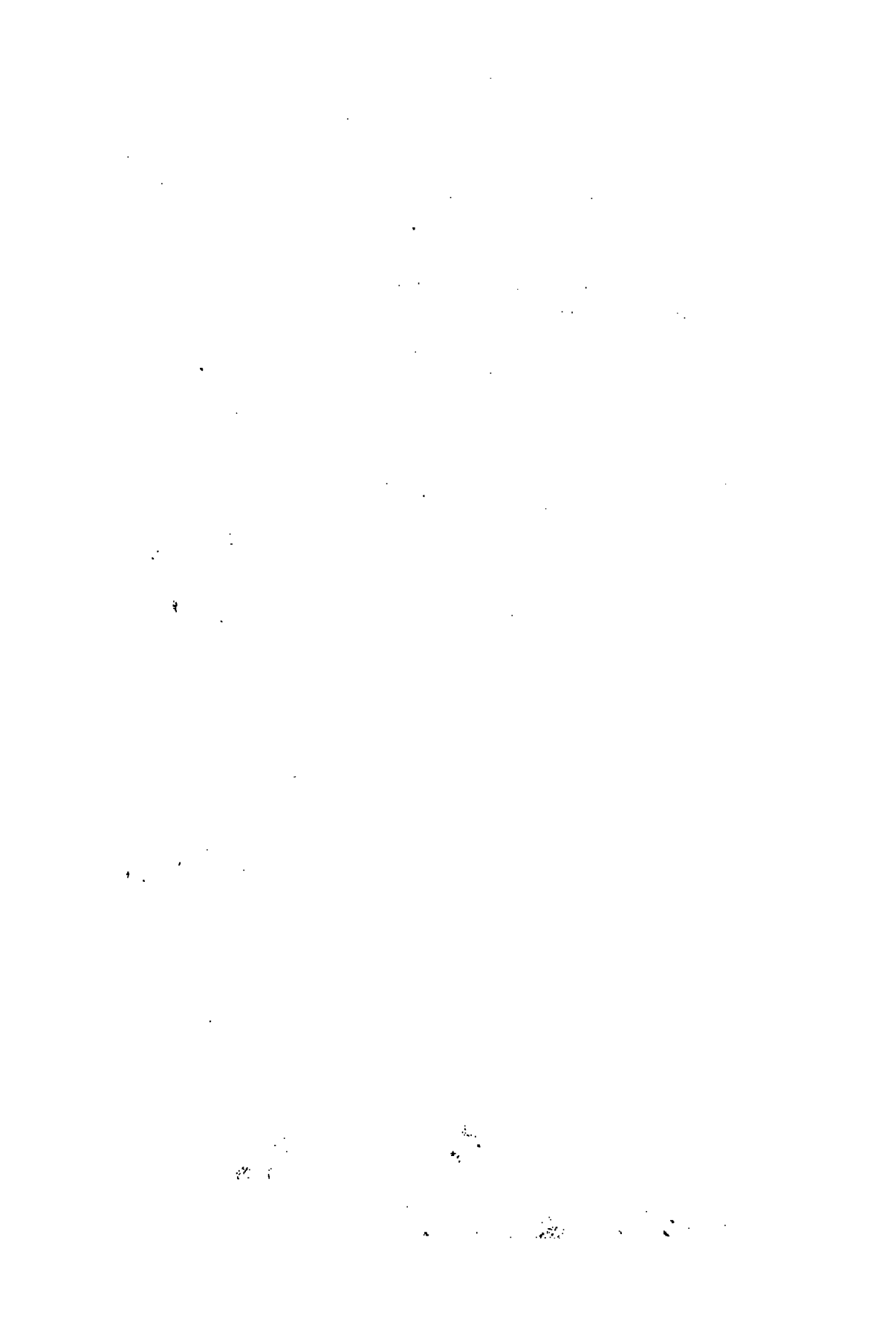
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- Would have been translated, like Enoch and Eli-
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A DOCTRINAL EPISTLE,

ADDRESSED TO

W—— B—— I——.

First Month, 15, 1820.

ESTEEMED FRIEND,

THINE of the fourth instant, came duly to hand; and was very acceptable. Thy object in writing, as it regards thy religious queries, attracted my attention; and although thou assures me, that, from present appearances, thou wilt never become a Quaker, or Friend; yet I apprehend that which induced thee to drop the sentiment, is a favourable omen, and leads me to hope, that if thou attends faithfully to that which has begun a good work in thy vision, and has enabled thee to see men, as trees, walking; and shown thee the baneful effects of the prejudice of education, and how mightily tradition and custom tyrannise over the human mind, and bind it down as with fetters of iron, too strong for reason alone to rend asunder, and set the captive soul free.

If thou willingly, and patiently, adheres to *that which hath begun a good work in thee, by shewing thee the difference between thing and thing, and things that differ*, I not only feel a hope (although it will be through deep inward suffering, and the cross, as none ever became real Christians, or Quakers, without it) that thou wilt yet become a Quaker, or Christian, which are one. And I hope a good one. But to come to this happy experience depends very much on thyself. For if thou willingly surrenders thyself as an offering to God, to do his will, as by the light in thy own heart and conscience he is pleased to manifest it to thee, thy understanding will be more and more opened, into things that concern thy present and everlasting peace.

I don't admire at the difficulties thou hast had to encounter, in regard to *the mode of redemption generally held by professing Christians, as being effected by the death, or outward dying, of Jesus Christ upon the outward, wooden, cross*. This, as it regards the redemption of the immortal soul from the bondage of sin, *I consider a vulgar error, that came in with the apostacy from primitive Christianity*.

("That which beginneth a good work (in us)
"shewing the difference between thing and thing,
"and things that differ.")

[St. Paul declared to the first Christians, "Whatsoever doth make manifest is light;" George Fox directed his followers to "the light within;" and the saving operation of that "grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ," is now acknowledged by most Protestant Churches, as "a light shining in a dark place, whereunto we do well to take heed."]

We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.—*1. Corinthians, iv. 7.*

The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is (it with) every one that is born of the spirit.—*John, iii. 8.*

The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light: but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.—*Luke, xi. 34, 35.*

("The mode of redemption generally held by
"professing Christians, as being effected by the
"death or outward dying of Jesus Christ upon the
"outward, wooden, cross.")

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ; as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot.—*1 Peter, xviii. 19.*

Who his own self bore our sins, in his own body, on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness.—*Ibidem, ii. 24.*

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree [or as Thompson hath it] *suspended on a cross.* Him hath God exalted, with his right hand, to be a prince and a saviour; for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things [said Peter to the High Priest, and the Great Council of the Jews,] and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.—*Acts, v. 30, 31, 32.*

God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake, in times past, unto the Fathers, by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things.—*Hebrews, i. 1, 2.*

He gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.—*1 Timothy, ii. 6.*

For God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World, through him, might be saved.—*2 Peter, iii. 9.*

Therefore: as by the offence of one (Adam) judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one (Christ) the free-gift came upon all men to justification of life.—*Romans, v. 18.*

[As it is said also in Job] Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom.—*Job, xxxiii. 24.*

The redemption effected by this outward offering would only, according to the true analogy of things, be *a redemption of the outward bodies*. For as, under the legal dispensation, there were many legal institutes, that were binding upon the people of Israel, and upon no other people; and a breach of these produced legal crimes, to which penalties were attached, and those inflicted on the bodies of the Israelites—*Now I consider that the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, on the outward cross, applied only, as a matter of redemption, to the Israelites*, redeeming them from the curse of that covenant, and the penalties attendant on every breach thereof. And this *outward redemption was the top stone of that figurative dispensation*, as by it that dispensation, with all its legal rites, and ceremonies, was abolished and done away.

Thence the Jews would no longer be guilty of any of those legal crimes, as the law that enjoined those legal rites was dead, and done away, by the outward death of *their Messiah*. And this *outward redemption of the outward bodies of the Israelites*, from the curses of their outward law,

(“Redemption of outward bodies.”)

[Where read we of a *redemption of outward bodies*, except in this heterodox Epistle? On the contrary are we not told by St. Paul?]

If Christ be in you *the body is dead*, because of sin; but the spirit is life, because of righteousness. (And again that) Christ shall *change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working of his mighty power, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.—See 1 *Corinthians*, xv. 51, 52; and *Philippians*, iii. 21.

(“The offering of the body of Jesus Christ applied *only*, as matter of redemption, to the *Israelites*.”)

[What saith the Apostle John to this point, himself a Hebrew?]

And he is the propitiation for our sins, and *not for ours only*; but for the sins of the whole world.—1 *John*, ii. 2.
Behold my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect, in whom my Soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the *Gentiles*.—*Isaiah*, xlii.
The desire of *all Nations* shall come, and I will fill this House (viz. the Temple of Jerusalem) with glory. The glory of this *latter House* shall be greater than that of the former.—*Haggai*, ii. 7, 9.

[Now this can only be intended spiritually, in reference to the glorious appearance of Christ therein: for the Second Temple (See *Ezra*, iii. 12,) was far inferior, in splendour, and magnificence, to that which was built by Solomon.]

(“The top stone of that figurative dispensation.”)

And he shall be for a *stone of stumbling*, and a rock of offence, to both the Houses of Israel. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken.—*Isaiah*, viii. 14, 15.
I say then, hath God cast away his People? Have they stumbled that *they* should fall? God forbid! But rather, through their fall *Salvation is come unto the Gentiles*.—*Romans*, xi. 1, 11.

(“Their Messiah.”)

[Is he the God of the *Jews only*? And not also of the Gentiles? *Yes, of the Gentiles also*, says the Apostle.—*Romans*, iii. 25.]

The *Gentiles* shall see thy righteousness.—*Isaiah*, lxii. 2.
He shall speak peace unto the *Heathen*.—*Zachariah*, ix. 10.
I beheld and lo a great number, which no man could number, of *all Nations and Kindreds*, and *People and Tongues*, stood before the Throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And cried with a loud voice, saying *Salvation to our God*, which sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the *Lamb*.—*Revelations*, vii. 9, 10.
All *Flesh* shall see the salvation of God.—*Luke*, iii. 6.
All *Nations* shall call him blessed.—*Psalms* lxxii. 17.

is a complete *figure of the inward redemption of the soul from sin, by the life, or spiritual blood, of Christ*, inwardly sprinkling our consciences, and enabling us to die to sin, as he died for sin, by which we are redeemed from dead works to serve the living God in newness of life, which makes the true Christian.

Why shouldst thou think it cruel, or painful, that God sent his son into the world; and, when in the world, permitted him to suffer death, by the hands of wicked men, when history informs us that many thousands of righteous men, and women, have, by the permission of the Almighty, been persecuted to death, by wicked men. Yet nevertheless we do not believe that God sent any of these into the world purposely to suffer death, in the cruel way they did, by the cruel power of the wicked. *Neither do I believe that God sent Jesus Christ into the world, purposely to suffer death, in the way he did, any more than all them.*

For I do not believe that God created any rational being, and sent him into the world to suffer death *for other men, because they were wicked, and he was righteous.* But that it was the righteousness of all these, that aggravated the wicked,

(“Redemption from sin.”)

[How wrought *according to the Scriptures*—no less *without us* by the meritorious (because voluntary) sufferings, and vicarious death of Christ, than *within us*, by the blood of sprinkling, which purifieth from dead works, to serve the living God, in newness of life.]

As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.—*John*, iii. 14.

And this [said Christ] is the will of him that sent me, that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day.—*Ibid*, vi. 40.

He took part of flesh and blood that he might destroy him that hath the power of death.—*Heb.* ii. 14.

There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit. For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.—Said Paul to the Romans, viii. 2, 3.

(“Jesus Christ not sent into the world purpose-ly to suffer death for other men, because they were wicked and he was righteous.”)

For, of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do, whatsoever thy hand, and thy counsel, determined before to be done.—*Acts*, iv. 27, 28.

And one of them named Caiaphas, being the High Priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all nor consider, that it is expedient for us that one Man should die for the People. And that the whole Nation perish not. This spake he, not of himself, but being High Priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that Nation; and not for that Nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the Children of God that were scattered abroad.—*John*, xi. 49, 50, 51, 52.

Jesus answered them saying, the hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and die, it abideth alone; but, if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.—*Ibid*, xii. 23, 24.

Thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the Dead.—*Ibid*, xxiv. 46.

Now is my Soul troubled (said Christ, in his agony) And what shall I say? Father save me from this hour! but for this cause came I unto this hour.—*Ibid*, xii. 27.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all Men unto me. This he said signifying what death he should die.—*Ibid*, v. 32, 33.

(Thus) In due time Christ died for the ungodly.—*Romans*, v. 6.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.—1 Peter, iii. 18.

That he by the grace of God should taste death for every Man.—*Hebrews*, ii. 9.

and was the procuring cause of their hatred and vengeance toward them, when they cruelly persecuted them to death.

But their sufferings were entirely opposite to, and inconsistent with, the purpose and will of God. For if it was not the perpetrators of these dreadful crimes, and most atrocious deeds, would all stand justified in his sight.

Hence we clearly see that all those kinds of doctrines that naturally, and necessarily, impeach the all-good and all-gracious Jehovah, with apparent cruelty, and incorrectness, in his purposes, and designs, concerning his rational creation, are founded on and have their origin in that false and inconsistent doctrine of *Predestination* and *Election*; which ought to be exploded by every rational being, as it destroys all the nobility and excellency of God's rational creation; and places them entirely below the poorest animals on earth.

I believe that the Almighty Creator of the Universe, never had but one sole purpose and design, in creating man, and placing him on this terra-queous globe; and that was to do his will, and thereby to continue in a state of happy union and communion with him, through the spirit. And

("The sufferings of the righteous (not excepting those of Jesus Christ) entirely opposite to, and inconsistent with, the purpose and will of God. For if it was not, &c.")

O Fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have written! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?—*Luke*, xxiv. 25, 26.

Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience, by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect (through suffering) he became the author of eternal salvation, unto all them that obey him.—*Hebrews*, v. 8, 9.

("If it was not so the perpetrators of these crimes would stand justified in his sight.")

What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured, with much long suffering, the vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction (no doubt by their own misdeeds).—*Romans*, ix. 22.

Then said Jesus Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.—*Luke*, xviii. 24.

("Predestination and Election.")

[What Gospel Election and Predestination is; and in whom it stands, according to the will of the Father; *because, said the Apostle, God hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the Truth.*]—See 2 *Thess.* ii. 3.]

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, according as he had *chosen* us in him, before the foundation of the world; that we should be *holy*, and without blame, before him, in love. Having *predestinated* us unto the adoption of Children, by Jesus Christ. To the praise of the glory of his *grace*, wherein he has made us *accepted in the Beloved*.—*Ephesians*, iii. 4, 5, 6.

Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation*, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.—*Romans*, iii. 25.

Whom God did foreknow he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many Brethren.—*Ibid.*, viii. 29.

Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not unto Seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy Seed, which is Christ.—*Galatians*, iii. 16.

did so order and arrange all things here on earth, in his wisdom and goodness, as to constitute a state of probation to man, during his militant state, or while his immortal soul continued in connexion with these mortal bodies; which were not to continue any longer in existence, than during the time of *this probationary scene; which was necessary to give the rational intelligent creature Man a fit opportunity to rise above that innocent state in which he was created, to the exalted state of virtue and glory*, by a just and righteous improvement of the liberty and power conferred upon him by his gracious Creator, for that purpose, and that purpose only, agreeably to the instruction of Divine Wisdom.

Hence we conclude that *God never sent his Son Jesus Christ*, nor any of his rational creation, *purposely into the world to suffer death by cruel men*; but only, in his free and voluntary choice, to attend to, and do his holy will, in all things; and thereby glorify and enjoy him. Which all agree to be the chief end and design of man's creation.

Wherefore all the persecutions, and cruel deaths, that have transpired in the world, among

(“*This probationary scene* fitted (according to
“E. H.) to give opportunity to the rational man,
“*to rise above that innocent state* in which he was
“created, to an exalted state of virtue and glory.”)

[What says the great Apostle to this paradoxical position?]

Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewings of the Holy Ghost.—*Epistle to Titus*, iii. 5.

For if righteousness came by the Law (and if not by the law of Moses, how much less by the law of Nature?) then Christ is dead in vain [or as Thomson has it, hath indeed died to no purpose.]—*Galatians*, ii. 21.

Without faith (which is elsewhere said to be the substance of things hoped for—the evidence of things not seen) it is impossible to please God.—*Hebrews*, xi. 6.

(“God never sent his son Jesus Christ purpose-
“ly into the world to suffer death.”)

[What says Daniel, one of the Jewish prophets, to this point.]

Seventy weeks (said Daniel during the Babylonish Captivity, viz. about six hundred years before the coming of Christ in the flesh) Seventy weeks (viz. prophetic weeks or 490 years) are determined upon thy People, and upon the Holy City, to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin, and to make reconciliation for iniquity; and to bring in everlasting righteousness; and to anoint the Most Holy. And after three score and two weeks shall the Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. And the People of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the City, and the Sanctuary [a prediction that was literally fulfilled when Titus sacked Jerusalem, in the reign of the Roman Emperor Vespasian, utterly destroying the outward Temple, and abolishing the sacrifices of the Law.] As Christ had said should be, about forty years before it came to pass.]—See *Daniel*, ix. 24, 25, 26, and *Matthew*, xxiv. 2.

Then (said Christ himself) Lo I come to do thy will, O God.—*Heb.* x. 9.

By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all—For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.—*Ibid.* 14.

mankind; not only the persecution and crucifixion of Jesus Christ; but also *all the sufferings and martyrdoms* committed by cruel men, *have had their rise and spring* from *man's unjust and unrighteous use of his liberty and power, conferred upon him only to do his Maker's will, in all things.*

But the sequel, as well as the very reason of things, clearly shews, that man, in his *probationary state, was possessed of a power and liberty* (uncontrolled by any other power) *to do his Maker's will*, by his instruction and aid, which was freely offered to his acceptance, or not to do it, if he chose to comply with the temptation. As he had communicated to him by his Maker a power of entire free choice. For if this was not the case he could never be virtuous or wicked, as all virtue consists in his choosing the good, and all sin in his choosing the evil, independent of any other cause, but his own choice.

("All the sufferings and martyrdoms of the
"just have had their rise and spring from man's
"unrighteous use of his liberty.")

[What say the Scriptures as to the afflictions of the righteous? Do they appear to be considered as *fortuitous events*? or are *those sufferings*, when they occur, and are patiently submitted to, *lightly esteemed* by the spirit?]

Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.—*Job*, i. 6, 7.

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints.—*Psalms* cxvi. 15.

The trial of your faith is much more precious than [that] of gold which perisheth.—*1 Pet.* i. 7.

He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight.—*Psalms* lxxii. 14.

Now no chastening seemeth for the present to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, to them that are exercised thereby.—*Hebrews*, xii. 11.

("Man, in his probationary state, was possessed of a power and a liberty to do his Maker's will.")

[If this be predicated of Adam, before he was ejected from Paradise it is not disputed or denied (*for it is written God made man upright*) but if it be meant to convey an idea that the fallen-race of Adam now come into the world, in a state of freedom, or power to choose good, and reject evil, (*unaided by that grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ*) Let that experienced Apostle St. Paul (*who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious*) expound the truth of God, as it is in Jesus.]

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.—*1 Corinthians*, ii. 14.

O wretched man that I am (*exclaimed the same Apostle, under a humbling sense of the infirmity of nature, and his own inability, as a Man, for any good word, or work.*) O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death. For when I would do good, evil is present with me.—*Romans*, vii. 24, and 31.

By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.—*Eph.* ii. 9.

Their righteousness is of me, with the Lord.—*Isaiah*, l. iv. 17.

The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.—*Galatians*, iii. 28.

[And to this purpose, it is said] Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness [they] have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.—*Romans*, x. 3.

And no doubt *had the Israelites all been faithful to that outward covenant, given them through Moses*, they would all have been prepared to receive *their Messiah* in the way of his coming, as did those who believed on him. And by which *the end of his coming would have been much more fully answered*. As all Israel then, like the disciples of Jesus Christ, would as willingly as they, have passed from the Old, and entered cheerfully into the New Dispensation.

Hence *no suffering, no crucifixion, no death of Jesus Christ, would have taken place*; but when his ministry on earth was finished, by fulfilling the law, and abolishing that outward covenant, and turning the minds of the people to the law written in the heart, by a life of perfect righteousness and self denial, he had introduced his disci-

("Had the Israelites all been faithful they would have received *their* Messiah; and the end of his coming would have been more fully answered.")

[What say the inspired prophets as to the end of his coming, who foresaw and predicted the same many hundred years before it actually took place?]

It is a light thing that *thou shouldst be my servant* to raise up the Tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, *I will also give thee* for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my *invasion* unto the end of the earth.—*Isaiah*, xlix. 6.

I will declare the decree, the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I shall give thee the *Heaven* for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.—*Psalms* ii. 7, 8.

[So likewise said good old Simeon when the child Jesus was presented in the temple by Mary his mother.]

Lord now lettest thou thy *Servant* depart in peace. For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all People, A light to enlighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy People Israel.—*Luke*, ii. 29, 30, 31, 32.

("The end of his coming would have been much more fully answered.")

[What then would have become of the resurrection of the dead? Would Christ, in that case, have been empowered, by the Father, to draw all men after him? What say the Scriptures of this matter, so deeply interesting to us all?]

Since by Man came death, by Man came also the Resurrection of the Dead. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every Man in his own order, *Christ the first fruits*, afterward *they that are Christ's*, at his coming.—*1 Corinthians*, xv. 21, 22, 23.

For, saith the Apostle. I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried, And that he rose again the third day.—*Ibid.* v. 3, 4.

And so it is written, the first Man Adam was made a living Soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.—The first Man is of the earth, earthy; the Second Man is the Lord from Heaven. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the Heavenly. For because he liveth we live also.—*Ibid.* v. 45, 47, and 49.

He was declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the Dead.—*Romans*, i. 4.

("No suffering, no crucifixion, no death of Jesus Christ, would have taken place; and he would, like Enoch and Elijah, have been translated, without suffering the pains of death.")

[What do the Scriptures indicate of the Divine purpose, in this respect?]

He is the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world.—See *Rev.* v. xii. and xiii. 8. Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled. Separate from Sinners, and made higher than the Heavens; who needeth not daily to offer up sacrifices (first) for his own sins, and then for the People's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself.—*Hebrews*, vii. 26, 27.

ples into the gospel, *he would, like Enoch and Elijah, have been translated, without suffering the pains of death.*

But as divine wisdom foresaw, that his people Israel would revolt from his commandments, and rebel against his law; and become cruel and hard hearted; so likewise he foresaw that the wicked among them would cruelly persecute and slay many of the righteous, and his son Jesus Christ among the rest. Therefore he inspired many of his servants to testify of these things among them, before they came to pass, as a warning and caution, that so those who were seeking after the right way might be preserved from taking any part therein. While those who wilfully hardened their hearts against reproof might suffer the penalties resulting from their crimes, which they had committed in their own free choice, contrary to the counsel and will of their Creator.

“Would have been *translated* like Enoch and
“Elijah.”)

Unto which of the angels said God at any time, *Must I be Enoch or Elijah?* Then art my Son, This day have I begotten thee.—*Hebrews*, i. 5.
And when he brought the First begotten into the World he saith, and let all the Angels of God worship him.—*Ibid.* v. 5.

[The following detached passages from the Prophets foreshew, with astonishing clearness and precision, the *humiliation* of the Messiah, when he fulfilled the law, by which retribution was exacted, bearing, in his own person, the offence of sin, and *suffering* as he was man the *punishment of transgression*, when he offered up himself, as a lamb without blemish, to take away the sins of the world. Being, at the same time, *as he was God*, to triumph over death, hell, and the grave, by rising again, on the third day, as had been prefigured by the sign of the prophet Jonah: and ascending into heaven, in the presence of his disciples: after being seen of them during forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.—See *Acts*, i. 3.]

He is despised and rejected of Men: a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. And we hid as it were our faces from him. He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: Yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.—*Isaiah*, liii. 3 to 7.

[The following minute circumstances were predicted in the Old Testament, and literally fulfilled in the New, as is too well known to need the usual references to the latter.]

Rejoice greatly O Daughter of Zion! Shout O Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee. He is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.—*Zachariah*, ix. 9.

To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the Nation abhorreth; kings shall see and arise; Princes also shall worship.—*Isaiah*, xlix. 7.

They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver, a goodly price that I was prized at of them.—*Amos*, ii. 6.

I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the Potter in the House of the Lord.—*Zachariah*, xi. 13.

They shall smite the Judge of Israel, with a rod, upon the cheek.—*Micah*, v. 6.

I gave my back to the Smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not my face from shame, and spitting.—*Isaiah*, l. 6.

They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.—*Psalms* xlii. 18.

They pierced my hands and my feet.—*Ibid.* v. 16.

They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink.—*Psalms* lxxix. 21.

Awake O sword against my Shepherd, and against the Man, that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts. Smite the Shepherd and the Sheep shall be scattered.—*Zachariah*, xiii.

When he shall be judged let him be condemned.—*Psalms* exix. 7.

He was numbered with Transgressors.—*Isaiah*, liii. 12.

All things [said Christ of himself] must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me.—*Luke*, xxiv. 44.

For the things that are written, concerning me, have an end.—*Ibid.* xxii. 17.

The doctrine of the Trinity, as held by many professing Christians, *I also consider a weak and vulgar error.* That of three distinct persons in one God. And that each of these persons is whole God* as I think is inserted in some of their confessions of faith. As I believe there can not be a greater absurdity than to apply personality to God, in any right sense of the word. As personality implies locality, which signifies limited to place, which would be very impious to say of the infinite Jehovah.

It is also a doctrine unwarranted by Scripture, as the word trinity is not to be found in the Bible. For although the Apostle is made to say, agreeably to our present translation, that there are three that bear record in Heaven, yet he assures us that these three are but one. And we have no certainty, that they have given us the Apostle's sense clearly, as we have no reason to believe the translators were inspired men. For they tell us that inspiration has ceased.

But admitting the translation to be correct, yet it carries with it no clear evidence of any such

* "Very God."

("The doctrine of the Trinity, I also consider
"a weak and vulgar error.")

[So says this writer, in the plenitude of self-opinion; but what
say the Scriptures of Truth to the mysterious unity of different
operations or manifestations of the same divine power? Do they
nowhere acknowledge *divers* appearances of the one Spirit?

Who hath ascended up into heaven, to descend? Who hath gathered the wind in his fist,
Who hath bound the waters in his garment? Who hath established a throne over the earth? What
is his name, and what is the Son's name, if thou canst tell?—*Job*, xxxviii. 1.

Then Nebuchadnezzar the King, who had cast Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego into the burning
furnace, was surprised to find them all safe, and said unto his Chamberlains, Did not we
cast three Men bound into the midst of the fire?—*1* I see four Men, bound, walking in the midst
of the fire. And they have no hurt. And the words were like the word of God.—*Dan*, iii. 24.

I know and see that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the
earth.—*Job*, xix.

[Confirmation and elucidation of the above passages, from the
New Testament.]

God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power—*Acts*, i. 21.
I will pray the Father [and Christ a while before his ascension into Heaven] and he shall give
you another *Comforter*, that he may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of Truth, whom the
World cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he
dwelleth in you, and shall be in you.—*John*, xiv. 16, 17.

("It is also a doctrine unwarranted by Scrip-
"ture.")

[Yet Paul said to the Corinthians:]

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost,
be with you all, Amen.—*2 Epist.*, chap. xiii. last verse.*

("The word trinity is not to be found in the
"Bible.")

[Granted; but what do the Scriptures say respecting the *unity*
of the God-head? Do they not speak of it as a trinity in unity?]

Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptising them in [or into] the name of the Father and of
the Son and of the Holy Ghost.—*Math.* xxviii. 19.

I will pray the Father [said Christ] and he shall give you another Comforter, even *the Spirit of*
Truth.—*John*, xiv. 16, 17.

[In the same *Eternal Spirit* are here expressly recognized—
the Father—the Son—and the Holy Ghost—distinct—not separate
—for these three are one.]

* The disputed text in the 1 Epistle of John, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the
Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," has not been here quoted, or re-
lied on, it being now generally allowed to have been interpolated in the Latin Bible, during a dark
period of the Church, viz. about the tenth century: yet there is reason to think that these words
might have been a restoration from an earlier copy, since Tertullian,* one of the ancient Fathers,
alluded to it, as to a text then extant; and St. Cyprian,† who lived in the same age, refers to it, in
two places.

It is remarkable that neither the learned *Barclay* nor *George Fox* nor *Isaac Penington* make any
scruple of adopting this text and consequently of avowing this belief as an article of their faith, in
which the celebrated controversialist *William Penn* expressly agrees with them. See their respec-
tive works or more readily their professions of faith as exhibited in a treatise upon the true Chris-
tian doctrine lately published by the Tract Society of Philadelphia.

* Tertullian *Prax.* c. 25.

† Cyprian de Unitat. *Eccles.* § 5, p. 77, and *Epist.* 73, ad Jubian, p. 110.

doctrine. As we ought to receive all written testimonials, according to their most easy and rational sense, and especially so when they in any degree contradict other more clear and plain testimonies of as high, or higher, origin.

There was nothing *more clearly impressed upon the Israelites, by their great lawgiver*, than to acknowledge but one God. And although they often asserted that *the Spirit of the Lord came to or was upon them*, yet they manifest *no idea of any divisibility*, or distinction of persons *between God and his Spirit*.

But wherever the Holy Spirit of God is there is God, and where God is, there is the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost, which are one, as the terms

“Although the Israelites often asserted that *“the Spirit of the Lord was upon them, yet they manifest no idea of any divisibility, or distinction of persons, between God and his Spirit.”*”

[What say the inspired penmen of the Old Testament, in particular, touching the foreknowledge, under the law, of the Saviour and Redeemer, that was to be made manifest unto Israel, when the fulness of time should be come? In the faith or earnest expectation of which the Jews, though now scattered abroad among all nations, still await the coming of the Messiah, as a temporal prince, or successor promised to David their king, by the mouth of God himself, and referred to by all their prophets, in their successive generations.]

Then thou spakest in vision to thy Holy One and saidst I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out of the People.—*Psalms* lxxix. 19.

And thou Bethlehem Ephratah though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.—*Micah*, v. 2.

The Lord thy God (said Moses in the Wilderness,) will raise up unto thee a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him ye shall hearken.—*Deuteronomy*, xviii. 15.

And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the People.—*Acts*, iii. 23.

are synonymous. For *God is a Spirit, and nothing but Spirit. And when this Spirit, or God, acts or operates upon the spirit of man, in his first operations he quickens and enlightens man's spirit, and in this operation he bears record of his own life in the soul of man, as the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost. And, as the spirit of man yields to and submits to his operation, there is a birth of God brought forth in the spirit of man, and by which he now bears record of his own life in the soul as father; and this birth of God in the soul being begotten by God, unites in record, or witness, in unity with God as son; and still it is only God, working all in all in the soul, agreeably to his will and pleasure. And which will agree with the doctrine of the Apostle, when he says, that "it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." And again, "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."*

As to the revelation of John, it was some of that Apostle's last writing, and at a time when he was advanced in deep experience; and we find that the most deep and mysterious writings of the Prophets and Apostles are often couched in alle-

“God is a spirit, and nothing but spirit. And
 “when this spirit, or God, acts or operates upon
 “the spirit of man, in his first operations he
 “quickens and enlightens man’s spirit, and in this
 “operation he bears record of his own life in the
 “soul of man, as the Holy Spirit, or Holy Ghost.
 “And as the spirit of man yields to and submits
 “to his operation there is a birth of God brought
 “forth in the spirit of man, and by which he now
 “bears record of his own life in the soul as Fa-
 “ther, and this birth of God in the soul being be-
 “gotten by God, unites in record or witness, in
 “unity with God as Son, and still it is only God
 “working, all in all, in the soul, agreeably to his
 “will and pleasure.”)

[What say the Scriptures as to this mysterious operation of the Spirit of God in the soul of man: are they not much more clear, and far more precise, than this perplexed exposition of them? — Art thou a Master in Israel, and knowest not these things?]

No man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.—*Luke*, x. 22.

Verily, verily, I say unto thee (said Christ to Nicodemus) except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God, (*John*, iii. 3.) That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, (6) The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is [it with] every one that is born of the Spirit, (8.)

[And Paul said to the Romans] the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us.—*Romans*, viii. 26.

[That this *new birth* in the soul of man, through the Divine Spirit, was to be operatively experienced, *even under the Law*, is clear from the prayer of David, in the li. Psalm:]

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

gorical similies, and similitudes. Therefore it requires us to come to that same experience rightly to comprehend, and to understand them. And hence, when I meet with parts or passages of Scripture, that I do not understand, I leave them, until I may arrive at a state of deeper experience. By which means I have come clearly to comprehend and understand, some things that at a previous time seemed mysterious to me.

And this I have no doubt will be thy case in what Paul says of women's keeping silence in the churches, as also in some other respects. For I apprehend if Paul hath said what we find recorded in 1 Corinthians, xiv. 34, 35, and Timothy, ii. 11, 12, that he had no allusion at all to their preaching or prophecying in them. And if he had, we have no right, nor reason at all, to admit it as sound doctrine, as it contradicts a number more of his own doctrines, on that point, (as also the general testimonies of Scripture,) which are much more rational, clear, and plain. As may be seen in his Epistle to the Romans, xiv. ch. Philipians, iv. 3. 1 Corinthians, xi. 5 to 13. And Paul assures us that male and female are both one in

Christ. That is when they become real Christians, of whom Christ is the head.

Also under the law there were prophetesses, as well as prophets, and the diffusion of the spirit, in the latter day, as prophecied by Joel, was equally on sons and on daughters, and servants and handmaids. And to believe otherwise is irrational, and inconsistent with the Divine attributes; and would impeach the Almighty with partiality and injustice to one half of his rational creation. Therefore, in my belief, it would be wrong to admit it, although asserted in the most plain and positive manner, by men or angels.

CONCLUSION.

It was originally designed, or intended, to have accompanied this exhibition of the chain of Scripture history, or rather of the history of mankind, by revelation and tradition, from Adam to Moses, and by prophecy from Moses to Christ (for to him give all the Prophets witness) with the opinions of competent judges as to the authenticity of the Sacred Writings, and their credibility as historical records. And ample collections were accordingly made to have confirmed THE WRITTEN WORD, by the testimony, or profession of faith and credence of wise and good men, in modern times; that is to say since the reformation from the apostacy (that so soon succeeded the apostolic age, and the internal revelation of which in their own hearts its first faithful professors, the noble army of martyrs, were fain to seal with their blood) but this intention has been given up, on finding that it would run into too great length for any thing short of an ample appendix. Yet some illustrious testimonies to Divine truth may not be here omitted, for example, GROTIUS, or DE GROOT, the learned Hollander who wrote an elaborate commentary on the Scriptures. SIR ISAAC NEWTON, the principal luminary of human science, who left behind him a discourse to prove that the prophecy of Daniel's weeks was an express prediction

of the coming of the Messiah; and that it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. ROBERT BOYLE, who was an exact searcher into the works of nature and Providence, and who saw atheism and infidelity beginning to show themselves in the voluptuous court of Charles II. This profound philosopher never suspected the scripture account of the supernatural conception and immaculate birth, or introduction into the world, of the son and sent of God; and he wrote a treatise expressly to answer all the objections which profane and irreligious persons have made against it, to countenance their unbelief. JOHN LOCKE, this penetrating casuist, the author of the famous essay on the human understanding, published a discourse on purpose to demonstrate the reasonableness of believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah; and in a judicious commentary upon the Epistles of St. Paul, he exhorts all Christians "to betake themselves, in earnest, to the study of the way to salvation pointed out in those holy writings, wherein God has revealed it from Heaven, and proposed it to the world." The great CHIEF JUSTICE HALE, in a treatise entitled, 'Of the chief End of Man,' expresses himself so fully, and with so much judicial precision as well as elaborate elucidation, that the reader must be referred for *his opinion* to the subjoined note, as justice can not be done to its amplitude in this concise recital.* SIR

* Sir Matthew Hale, in his book called *Contemplations Moral and Divine, treats of the Scriptures* of both Testaments, in the following no less lucid than logical manner, as if delivered from the seat of judgment, or in the judicial character, to which he was so bright an ornament.

"*What those Scriptures are.* 1. They are the Canonical Books of the *Old and New Testament*, excluding the Books commonly call'd *Apocrypha*. These were written in several Ages by holy Men inspir'd by the Spirit of God, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. Some Parts thereof, as the five Books of *Moses*, above three thousand five hundred Years since; and that of the *New Testament* above one thousand six hundred Years since. And *Almighty God*, who has had a most special Care of the everlasting Good of Mankind, hath, by a wonderful Providence, hitherto preserv'd them uncorrupted, and hath dispers'd them over all Nations in their several Languages; that as the common Salvation concern'd all Men, so the Means of attaining it might be likewise common to all Men.

"2. *Why the divine Providence has order'd it to be put into Writing.* It is true, in the first Ages

WILLIAM JONES, the orientalist, one of the judges of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal, confessedly one of the first philosophers of the present age, in one of his latest annual Discourses before the Asiatic Society, is thought to have done more to give validity to the Mosaic account of the Creation,

"of the World, till the Time of *Moses*, which was near three thousand five hundred Years, the Will of God was not put into Writing, but was deliver'd over by Word of Mouth from Father to Son. And this was the Direction that Men had to know and to obey God. Because in those ancient Ages of the World Men liv'd long: For *Adam*, the first Man, liv'd above twenty Years after *Methusalem*, the eighth from *Adam*, was born; and *Methusalem* lived almost an hundred after *Sem* was born; and *Sem* lived above sixty Years after *Isaac* was born. So that in these three Men, *Adam*, *Methusalem*, and *Sem*, all the Truths of God, for above two thousand Years, were preserved and delivered over.

"But when after the Ages of Men were shorter, and when the Church of God grew to be National, as it was after the *Jews* came out of *Egypt*, then God himself wrote his Law in Tables of Stone, and *Moses* wrote his five books; and then, from that time forward, the sacred Histories and Prophecies under the *Old Testament*, and the Gospel, and other Parts of the *New Testament*, were committed to Writing for these Reasons principally.

"1. That they might be the better preserved from being lost or forgotten.

"2. That they might be the better preserved from being corrupted: For that which is delivered only by Word of Mouth is many times varied and changed in the second or third hand.

"3. That it might be the better dispersed and communicated to all Mankind. And this was done in the *Old Testament* by Translations of it into *Greek*, about two hundred Years before Christ, and dispersing it into a great part of the World. And after Christ's Time, both the *Old* and *New Testament*, translated into several Languages, and since dispersed over the World; which could not have been so well done, had it not been at first in Writing.

"Thus the Wisdom and Providence of God provides for the Exigence of all Times most wisely and excellently: And having preserved part of this precious Jewel, the *Old Testament*, for the most part, within the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, till it was broken, about the Time of Christ, by the *Romans*, hath delivered both to all Mankind.

"3. It is to be enquired, *What Evidence we have to prove those Writings to be the Word of God.* And omitting many others, we insist on these principally.

"1. In the Writings of Men, especially when written by several Men at several times, their Writings do seldom or never agree, but differ and cross one another. And the Reason is, because they are written by several Men, who are all guided by several Minds and Judgments. But the Scriptures, though written by several Men in several Ages, many unacquainted with one another's Writings, yet they all consent and speak the same Truth, which is an Evidence that it was one and the same Spirit that did dictate them.

"2. It is not possible for any Man, without Revelation from God, to foretell Things to come. Now these holy Writings, foretold things that must certainly come to pass in their several Seasons, thro' many Generations after the Prophecy written, therefore they were written by Inspiration from God. As for Instance, the *Babylonian* Captivity, and the Deliverance from it, by *Jeremy*; the *Persian* and *Grecian* Monarchy, by *Daniel*; the Birth and Death of Christ, the final Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and Dispersion of the *Jews*, the Conversion of the *Gentiles*, by *Isaiah*, and the rest of the Prophets.

"3. The Matter contained in these holy Writings, is that of the greatest Importance; the Will of God concerning Man, the Discovery of the Creation of the World by God; of Assurance of the Life to come; of the Means of Peace between God and Man. These are things of the highest Concernment in the World, yet things which could never be discovered but by God himself; and such as never any Writings of Men only ever could discover, or durst pretend unto: The Height, and Rarity, and Excellence, and Weight of the Matter of these Books, do evidence, that they were the Revelations of God to Man, and by his Providence committed to Writing, and delivered over to Mankind, as the Rule to attain their chief End.

"4. As the Rule to attain our chief End must come from God, and as the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament* are the Word of God, so we say, *That these Scriptures are the Rule to attain our chief End.* Good Books of other Men, good Education, good Sermons, the Determinations of the Church, are good Helps; but it is by this Rule we must try other Mens Books and Sermons, yea, the very Church itself. Thus the *Bereans* tried the Doctrine of the Apostles themselves by the Scriptures which they then had, and are commended for it, *Acts* 17, 11. And *Peter* prefers the Evidence of the Scriptures before a voice from Heaven, *2 Pet.* 1, 18, 19. And Christ himself appeals to the Scriptures to justify himself and his Doctrine, *John* 6, 39. And if the Scriptures be the Rule,

"1. Then not a natural Conscience, especially as the Case now stands with Mankind; for that is many times corrupted and false principled, puts Good for Evil, and Evil for Good: It is, and may be, a great Help, Guide and Direction, not a perfect Rule.

"2. Then not the Writings and Traditions of Men: God that appoints the End and Means, must be the Discoverer of the Means of our Salvation.

"3. Then not pretended Revelations; those may be Mens Imaginations, or the Devil's Delusions:

than any contemporary researches of the learned. This great scholar is well known to have been particularly eminent for his attainments in Astronomy, Chronology, Antiquities, Languages, and Natural History, as well as Law. Before he went to India, it is said, that he was not free *himself* from the sceptical bias against the authority of the Scriptures: but, when in Asia, finding, in the course of his researches into the antiquities of the East, that many of the leading circumstances of the Mosaic history were detailed, with various degrees of corruption, or perversion, in the writings of the Hindoos, he set himself to investigate, with minute and rigid attention, all those intricate theological points, which had occasioned his doubts; and the result was his entire conviction of the verity of the Mosaic records. After his decease, this declaration was found written on one of the blank leaves of his common reading Bible:

“ I have regularly, and attentively, read the Holy Scriptures; and am of opinion, that the Collection of Tracts, which we call, from their excellence, the Scriptures, contains, (independently of a Divine origin) more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, purer morality, more important history, and finer

“ to prevent and discover which, God hath set up this great and standing Revelation of his Scriptures.

“ J. Then not the Church, for that may err; and it hath no way to evidence itself but by the Scriptures, which are its Foundation.

“ The Business of Man's Salvation is of that Importance, and the Wisdom of God so great; that he will not commit so weighty a Matter to such uncertain Rules as these, but hath provided one of his own making, the Holy Scriptures.

“ But though what Man is to believe concerning God, and what Duty God requires of Man, be the principal Matter or Subject of the Scriptures, yet they also contain very many *other Matters*, that do very much concern us to know and believe; as namely, what we are to understand concerning ourselves, the State of our Creation, the Fall of Man, the State wherein that Fall hath put all Mankind, the Means of our Recovery, the different Estate of the Good and Bad after Death, the History of the Church and Household of God, from the Creation of Man, till some thirty Years after the Resurrection of Christ.” &c.

“strains, both of poetry and eloquence, than could
“be collected, within the same compass, from all
“other books that were ever composed, in any age,
“or in any idiom.

“The two parts of which the Scriptures consist
“are connected by a chain of compositions [the
“Prophets, &c.] which bear no resemblance, in
“form or style, to any that can be produced, from
“the stores of Grecian, Indian, Persian, or even
“Arabian learning.

“The antiquity of those compositions no man
“doubts; and the unconstrained application of them
“to events long subsequent to their publication, is a
“solid ground of belief, that they were genuine pre-
“dictions, and consequently *inspired*.”

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